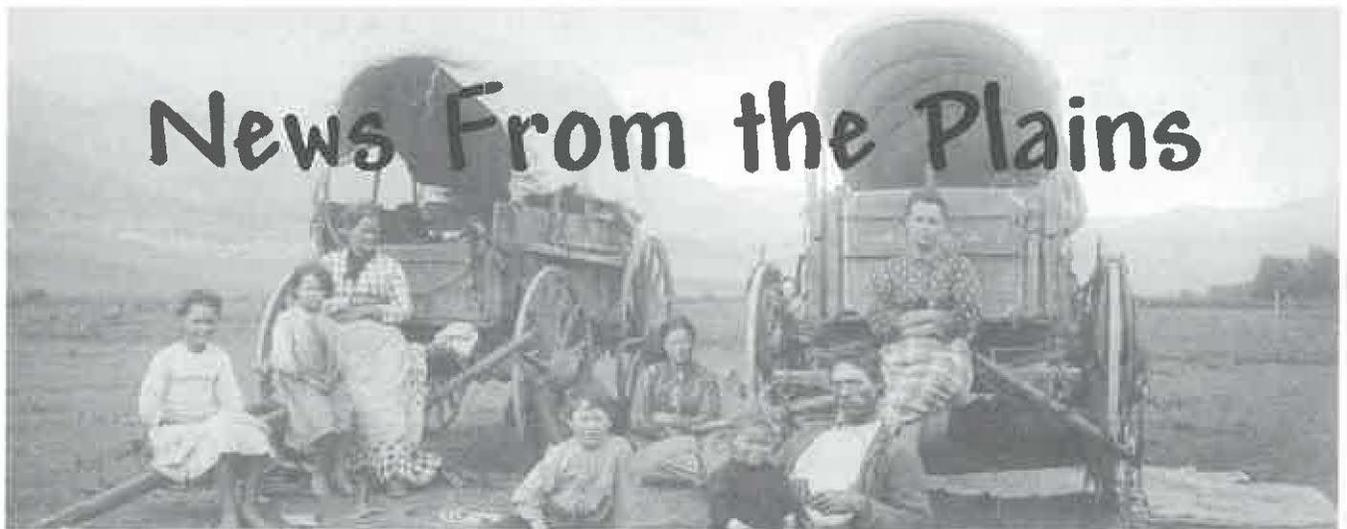


News From the Plains



Vol. XX, No. 3

Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

Summer 2006

OCTA Heads to St. Joe in August

Field trips to Fort Leavenworth, Weston and Atchison, along the St. Joe Road and to historic Mormon sites in Missouri are on tap during the 24th Annual OCTA Convention Aug. 8-12 in St. Joseph, MO. The Gateway Chapter and the City of St. Joseph will welcome OCTA members to "Rivers, Plains & Wagon Trains."

The schedule of events also includes tours to Jesse James Country, a bus tour of St. Joseph museums and other city attractions, a day camp for children, a reception and Author's Night, plus the annual awards banquet where OCTA will recognize contributions by members and friends of the trails.

Christopher Corbett, author of *Orphans Preferred: The Twisted Truth and Lasting Legend of the Pony Express* will give the keynote address at the convention on Wednesday, Aug. 9 after the general business meeting. He will examine how the myths of the Pony Express evolved.

Presentations will be given during the week by Jackie Lewin and Marilyn Taylor, "Overview of the St. Joseph Trail Network: Roads and Ferries;" John Mark Lambertson, "I Remain Your Affectionate Wife: Letters of an African-American Gold Rush Widow;" and Joseph Houts, "St. Joe Emigrant Experiences during the Border Wars and the Civil War."

Other sessions will focus on such topics as fur traders, archaeological excavations at various sites, Indian removal, intimacy, divorce and spousal abuse on the trail, cooking on the trail, early settlements of the Ioway people, and Mormon travels in the area.

Dennis Larsen will present a program, "Ezra Meeker Revisited," along with other special activities related to the Meeker Centennial planned during convention week.

Workshops and informational sessions will be presented related to chapter development, conventions, journal writing, wagon construction, the historic resource database for the national historical trails and the COEEmigrant Names 2 program. Della White will have a dress review of pioneer clothing and costumes.

For children, a day camp will be conducted in cooperation with the Pony Express National Museum involving activities Wednesday through Saturday. College credit is available to educators through the Heritage Institute/Antioch University of Seattle. For information on that program call 541-276-8206 or e-mail drighsighed@ucinet.com prior to July 25.

Special entertainment will be provided by Esther Kreek playing the hammered dulcimer, the OCTA Band, Ann and Terry Brock and Fresh Cut Grass and the Missouri Town Dancers who will perform at a barbecue held beside the Missouri River.

Convention headquarters is at the Ramada Inn, 4016 Frederick Blvd., St. Joseph, MO. Call headquarters for more information, 888-811-6282.

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News From the Plains

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Aurora, Colorado Commemorates Smoky Hill Trail

The Aurora, CO, Historic Preservation Commission celebrated 21 years of historic preservation in Aurora and commemoration of Aurora's newest local historic landmark in May with the unveiling of a marker recognizing the Smoky Hill Trail. Guest speaker was OCTA member Lee Whiteley, who discussed the significance of the Smoky Hill Trail.

What's Happening...

July 8, 2006

Trail Marking
Ditto Creek Burn Area
Idaho

July 15, 2006

Colorado-Cherokee Trail
Chapter Trek
Cherokee Trail, LaPorte, CO

July 22, 2006

Donner Pass Trail Hike
CA/NV

July 22 - Aug. 21, 2006

Ezra Meeker Reenactment

August 8-12, 2006

OCTA Annual Convention
St. Joseph, MO

August 19, 2006

Mt. Stephens to
Nevada City Tour
CA/NV

September 9, 2006

Trail Marking
McTucker Road
Idaho

September 23, 2006

Trail Marking
Ditto Creek Burn Area
Idaho

August, 2007

OCTA Annual Convention
Scottsbuff/Gering, NE

August, 2008

OCTA Annual Convention
Elko, NV

♦♦♦

NFP Deadline

Fall Issue

August 25, 2006

We Can Because We Think We Can

He Can Who Thinks He Can was the interesting and thought provoking title of a book published years ago. The title comes to mind every now and again as difficult situations arise.

These six words can apply to almost every endeavor in life or business. It could apply to teaching and learning, to improving a business or organization, or be applied to people in improving our knowledge, abilities and performance.

All organizations are different in nature, as are people. What makes one stand out above or apart from the other might be an element of determination, an element of spirit, or an element of a will to succeed.

I receive newsletters from all OCTA's chapters, and have visited a number of them and find that some chapters have a full plate of projects, some have only one or two and others have none. The only difference in any of the chapters, as I see it, is some have the will to move forward. They have the faith and determination that they can accomplish a project whether it is trail mapping, marking, and monitoring or hosting a National Convention.

The OCTA membership and Chapters, in particular, recently had an opportunity to place names in nomination to fill forthcoming vacancies on the National Board of Directors. Only a few names were received for consideration. We should have people standing in line wanting to be elected to the Board. Please consider placing your name in nomination the next time the call goes out. Every one of us has something to offer, please share your talents with

the entire membership. People accomplish much because they think they can.

Those who move forward, whether it is an individual member, a chapter or organization, are those who have the courage to undertake good and sometimes difficult tasks or projects and seeing them through. Look for things that can be done and need to be done, grasp the opportunity and the run with it.

OCTA needs your help, enthusiasm, energy and willing spirit in order to move forward. Chapter presidents, I encourage you to get to know your members, get to know their talents and interest and then put them to work because a good member is a busy member.

I would like to make a suggestion for individual or chapter involvement. Recently I attended a Trail Preservation Training class conducted by our National Preservation Officer, Dave Welch, with the able assistance of Leslie Fryman, Terry Del Bene, Kay Threlkeld and Don Hartley. I came away impressed with its high quality, professional presentation and quantity of usable information disseminated.

The opening remarks bear repeating:

"Why Are We Here?"

1. Trail preservation is the responsibility of all OCTA members.

2. Success requires an extensive volunteer team.

- More than 12,000 miles of trails.

- Threats from development are widespread.

3. Issues and solutions are complex.

4. Your help is needed, but we need to provide the tools."

To summarize the class, the fine points of OCTA's Preservation Policy were restated.

■ Commitment to trail preservation.

■ Cooperative efforts to find solutions.

■ Focus on best-preserved sites and segments.

■ Require mitigation for loss of trail setting.

■ Require restoration and reclamation.

"It is no use saying 'We are doing our best,'" said Winston Churchill. "You have got to succeed in doing what is necessary." *What is necessary* is to continue making OCTA the premier trails organization – the leader in the field – the group others look up to and go to for help and information.

Thank you for all you do.

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or order on line at www.octa-trails.org

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Trails Workshop Explores Partnership Opportunities

The partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) Historic Trails Workshop in Kansas City, May 5-7, attracted more than eighty people representing fourteen of the sixteen National Historic Trails. Also present were representatives from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS), National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and USDA Forest Service (including two people from the Scenic Byways program), plus people representing other agencies and not-for-profits.

The workshop involved opportunities to learn about the various programs available through the federal agencies and ways in which trail groups like OCTA could better partner with these agencies and our not-for-profit peers.

We heard about challenges, goals, and opportunities, then took a five hour driving tour of sites around Kansas City relative to the Lewis & Clark, Oregon, California, and Santa Fe Trails. We weren't taking the tour simply to learn the history of the sites (as you do during OCTA convention tours), but rather to look at how the sites were developed, how partnerships helped accomplish the work, and to think about how we might put together future projects by utilizing what we learned about what did and did not work at the selected Kansas City sites.

Christopher Douwes from the Washington, DC office of the FHWA talked about the innumerable ways in which historic trail organizations could take advantage of federal transportation funding via transportation enhancements and

other funding mechanisms for recreational trails. Representatives of both the Missouri and Kansas Departments of Transportation talked about how to utilize their programs, noting that 95 percent of all FHWA money is filtered through the states. Because so much information was presented, it was agreed that a small handbook would be developed to be given to participants to help them wade through the application process.

Mark Conley and Chel Ethun of the Scenic Byways Program presented information about how scenic byways and historic trails could work together. There are already byways in place that are trail-themed (the Pony Express Scenic Byway in Utah, for example) and they strongly encouraged the gathered to think about areas where local organizers could apply to make a highway parallel to the historic trail a scenic byway. This status brings with it increased awareness, extra marketing and more economic development and tourism dollars. The added attention could also lead to increased interest in the historic trail organization.

In a session regarding trail protection on public lands, Carolynne Merrell, an archaeologist from Idaho who works primarily with the Nez Perce Trail, talked about ways to establish baselines for preserving historic inscriptions on historic trails. Tom Burke of Nevada-BLM discussed Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act, while OCTA's National Preservation Officer Dave Welch utilized examples of his work to put Section 106 in an on-the-ground perspective.

In a session devoted to trail protection on private lands, NPS National Historic Trails Superintendent Jere Krakow talked specifically about utilizing conservation easements on a ranch near Park City, UT to preserve remnants of the Pony Express, Mormon Pioneer and California Trails from the threat of development by a ski lodge.

David Beaver of the BLM's Land & Water Conservation Fund outlined ways to use his program to buy parcels of land to protect historic trail remnants. Beaver discussed the recent purchase of land along the Sandy River in Oregon that preserved some of the Oregon Trail. There is still \$2.2 million in the BLM's state office in Salem to buy more parcels. However, the money is just sitting there and if not utilized soon there is the threat that this money could be applied for other uses, such as fire suppression. He requested that we tell our members in Oregon to personally contact the Oregon State Director of the BLM in Salem to encourage him to utilize the \$2.2 million for its intended purpose before it is either sent back to Washington, DC, or put to use elsewhere. For more specific information, please contact Beaver directly at david_beaver@blm.gov.

During concurrent sessions, I attended Lou Austin's program entitled "Community Identity, Economic Development, Health, Intermodal Transportation, Education, and Historic Interpretation Along the Santa Fe, Oregon and California Trail Corridor in South Kansas City," which augmented a

Continued on Next Page

Partnership Opportunities

Continued from Previous Page

portion of the previous day's tour. Austin is utilizing the historic corridor of the Oregon, California, and Santa Fe Trails as an economic development tool. By building an actual recreation trail in the corridor of the three trails, he is able to connect the remaining historic sites and trail ruts, while at the same time spur increased property values and new business investment.

He has utilized funds available through MoDOT and the FHWA to accomplish some of this. In particular, for \$6,000 he was able to get the interstate interchange renamed the Three Trails Crossing Interchange, replete with wagon, emigrant, bison and Native American silhouettes. Since 150,000 vehicles a day pass through this interchange, the trails will get over one million exposures per week. To put this in perspective, Sprint recently paid \$10 million for the naming rights of Kansas City's new \$280 million arena. It is likely that the arena will not see one million visitors in a year. On the other hand, the \$300 million interchange will see that many visitors every week, and trail reminders were placed in the area for an investment of \$6,000.

For anyone who can make it to Kansas City, I would highly recommend having a look at Hickman Mills High School, Schumacher Park, and the interchange as examples of new ways in which we can think about utilizing the trail corridor to help communities better develop their infrastructure. In my opinion, OCTA needs to position itself as partner in similar projects around the country, whether we lead the charge or join an already existing coalition.

The Fish & Wildlife Service also outlined programs. Essentially, there are millions of dollars available for habitat restoration along historic trails. FWS spokesman Nathan

Caldwell suggested that you contact your local refuge manager to talk about possible projects, including restoration and interpretation, which may be coupled with other money available through FHWA, NPS, BLM, or even Forest Service funds (in addition to private monies and in some cases, in-kind services).

There are 13 National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs) along the California and Oregon Trails including Bear Lake (ID), Cokeville Meadows (WY), Fallon (NV), Grays Lake (ID), Minidoka (ID), Modoc (CA), Ruby Lake (NV), Seedskaadee (WY), Stillwater (NV), William L. Finley (OR), and Clear Lake (CA), Lower Klamath (CA, OR) and Tule Lake (CA) all on the Applegate Trail.

Keep in mind that the trail need not be on NWR land to qualify for funding. Please contact me for additional information should you desire it. I can also point you to a couple of agency people who might be of help.

In a recap of the weekend, we talked about future action. OCTA's National Preservation Officer Dave Welch proposed developing a Partnership-level preservation program, which was met with much enthusiasm. A committee was established to further study this program for development and implementation. A FHWA manual on how to use Transportation Enhancement and recreational trail funding was promised.

I believe the weekend was a watershed moment for the Partnership. For the first time since I've been involved, I felt as if we were moving past a talking stage and heading toward an action stage. We finally have an understanding of the BLM cost-share program, and though the Forest Service doesn't have a

specific program, we were told that matching monies could be brought to bear in different Forest Service units. These funds can only help augment all of the excellent work we already do in cooperation with the NPS.

Equally important, we are now partners of the Fish & Wildlife Service and can work with them in the manner I delineated above. We also now know how we might utilize the Scenic Byways program to better market our trails. Scenic Byway designation has proven to increase visitation and sustain local economies.

Most important of all, I am now starting to get a better understanding of the funds available through the Federal Highway Administration. I would encourage you all to think about projects in terms of partnering with the above-named federal agencies, and our interests align with other historic and scenic trail partners. Also be sure to consider your own local partners, such as city, county, and state governments, chambers of commerce, departments of tourism, and others. These are the types of things we need to consider as we fully develop our long-range plan.

I should add that OCTA has already begun to accomplish one of the goals set for itself at the strategic planning session in Phoenix last March. That goal was to position OCTA as a leader, if not the leader, of historic trail organizations. I think everyone who attended the workshop would recognize OCTA as such.

Because of the technical detail of the presentations at the meeting, you can contact me for copies or more information by calling 888-811-6282 or e-mail me at Tboley@indepmo.org.

Headquarters' Manager's Report

Kathy Conway
Kconway@indepmo.org

OCTA Releases New Coin, Fund Drive Concludes

The OCTA store announces release of Coin No 3: the Ezra Meeker coin. It will be available July 22 during the first stop of the Ezra Meeker Commemoration in Puyallup, WA. We already have advance sales of 25 percent of our expected supply. Call us on our toll free number of 888-811-6282 and reserve your coin today. The cost is \$29.95 plus shipping

Also, only eleven copies of our second coin depicting Bent's Fort remain. If you want the OCTA coin set, call while we still have this item.

The results of our 2005-2006 Fundraising Campaign are tabulated. This year we exceeded all previous years' totals as 273 OCTA members contributed \$21,313. Special thanks to all who responded.

Annual Fund	\$ 9,838
Archaeology	510
COED	425
City of Rocks	110
Education	1,465
G&S/Trail Marking	1,731
Endowment	2,735
Preservation	3,285
Publication	450
Trail Mapping	764
Total	\$21,313

Members contributing to the campaign since February of 2006 are:

Paul Ackerman
Antony Almond
Ron Anderson
Jerry Bedell
Edith-Adele Bellmer
Jean Bennett

Joyce Bolerjack
John Bond
Thelma Bowser
Frank & Laurie Brown
Lloyd Brownell
Brian Burton
John Bywater
Gail Campbell
Dick Campbell
Evelyn Colvin
Judge Linda Cook
Nancy & Arthur Costa
George & Karen Counsell
Eleanor Craig
Jo Anna Dale
Gary de Simone
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Dennis Fishel
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Robert Harmon
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Cheryl & Gilbert Hoffman
Herbert & Lois Hunn
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Daniel Woodhead, III

California Historic Trail Center Out For Bid

By **Mike Brown**
Elko BLM

The long-awaited California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center construction project in Elko, NV, has been released to potential bidders.

The project began as a grass-roots effort in 1996 when a group of Elko County citizens—Paul Sawyer, Ralph Gamboa, Bob Pierce and Dale Porter—decided they wanted a Trail Center built in the county. Recognizing that no one entity had sufficient resources to fund such an

undertaking, the local community supporters used collaboration and partnership to obtain the financial commitments needed.

The City of Elko committed \$2 million to the project; Elko County committed \$1 million; and the State of Nevada committed \$3 million. In 2000, the Nevada Congressional Delegation led by U.S. Senator Harry Reid sponsored Senate Bill 2749; Congressman Jim Gibbons sponsored the companion legislation in the House. Thus far, Senator Reid has secured \$8 million in appropriations for the Trail Center project.

The 16,000-square-foot facility will be located about eight miles west of Elko off the Hunter Exit of I-80 on 40 acres of land donated by the William Searle family. The facility will include an access road, parking, and a 20,000-square-foot interpretive plaza.

Bidding for constructing the Trail Center will be open for 45 days. It is expected that the contract will be awarded in July with construction to begin in August. Construction is estimated to take 16 to 18 months and the Trail Center is scheduled to open in August of 2008.

Trail Journal

Candy Moulton
NFP Editor

Following the Overland through Southern Wyoming



Overland Trail between Sulphur Springs Station and Washakie Station in Carbon County, WY, June 2, 2006. (Photo by Candy Moulton)

In June I had the opportunity to travel portions of the Overland Trail in Wyoming with Ben Kern's Wagon Train. This year's trip involved about 200 miles from Laramie to the Washakie Stage Station in central Carbon County.

In 1824-25 trappers with General William Ashley's fur brigade first traveled the route that would become the Overland Trail. Jim Bridger knew of the route by 1835, John C. Fremont traveled portions of it in 1842 and Cherokees en route to California in 1849 followed a similar path.

In 1850 Captain Howard Stansbury, with Bridger as his guide, took the route noting that it would be a shorter road for travelers between Fort Laramie and Fort Bridger than the Oregon Trail. Lieutenant F. T. Bryan established a military wagon road over Stansbury's route in 1856. General stage travel began in 1862 and continued through the decade.

Serving the travelers were a number of stage stations established between 10 and 20 miles apart. Among those on Ben's route this year were Big Laramie, Little Laramie, Cooper Creek, Rock Creek, Medicine Bow, Fort Halleck, Elk Mountain, Pass Creek, North Platte Crossing, Sage Creek, Pine Grove, Bridger's Pass, Sulphur Springs, and Washakie.

Before the wagon train began, Ben and I got on the trail north of Baggs, WY, near the old town of Dad. In his pickup we drove west, crossed the Muddy near Washakie Station, and followed the trail on east from there.

Through a region that is big, dry, and unfettered by development, the trail skirts the Muddy most of the way from Washakie Station to Sulphur Springs Station. It is exactly the kind of country you want to ride/drive a wagon through to get a sense of what the emigrants experienced.

Carrying on Ezra Meeker's Legacy

By the time you read this, my wife and I will probably be somewhere along the Oregon Trail as part of the re-enactment of Ezra Meeker's 1906 Oregon Trail Monument Expedition. Five couples from the Puget Sound area will accompany one of Ezra's 1906 wagons from Puyallup to St. Joseph and back. We will be joined in Baker City by Dixon Ford and the fine ox team that appeared at last year's convention.

Meeker's wagon from the 1906 journey is stored at the Washington State Historical Society (WSHS) in Tacoma. The oxen, Dandy and Dave, are on display in the museum, but the wagon is accessible by appointment only. Our recent visit to the wagon confirmed that the wagon we are using is a good representation of the original. We all felt a close link to Ezra as we inspected the 1906 wagon.

As I prepared for the 2006 journey, the relevance of the 1906 expedition became obvious: Meeker was the original post-emigration trail marker and mapper. We are, in effect, carrying on his work. I am sure that he would be pleased to know that 100 years later there is a dedicated group that shares his love and respect for the trail and its pioneer travelers.

However, both his marking and mapping efforts ran into some difficulties. He set out to raise funds from locals at each site along the trail, but this was only marginally

successful. Dennis Larsen, in his book *The Missing Chapters: The Untold Story of Ezra Meeker's Old Oregon Trail Monument Expedition*, lists twenty-one markers that Meeker

early date "improvements" and "developments" had taken their toll on the old trail. As a result Meeker decided to make another journey in 1910 with an emphasis on mapping.

His source was what he referred to as state and county maps. In fact, his map source was primarily the Government Land Office (GLO) surveys, a starting point for much of our current research.

Meeker obtained copies of the GLOs with the trail often identified as the "Old Emigrant Road." Meeker did not add many annotations, although suggested marker locations are shown in a few instances. The almost complete set of map tracings from The Dalles to Independence is in rolls that would extend to about 300 feet if each state

series was placed end-to-end.

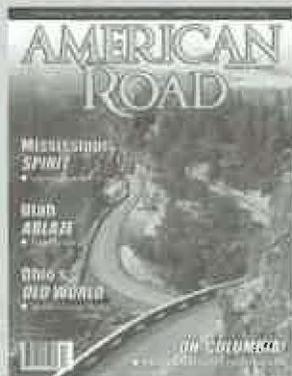
As we conduct our mapping and marking efforts, it is important to recognize that Meeker encountered uncertainty in its location in 1906. The problem has been exacerbated by 100 years, but modern technology can offset some of the problems. We have archaeological techniques, digital photography, aerial and satellite photography, mapping computers and software that are surely well beyond Ezra's wildest dreams. We also have volunteers by the dozen who are willing to tackle this difficult task. As we do our trail work, remember Ezra Meeker! His spirit remains within OCTA.



From left to right: Dennis Larsen, Pat Ziobron, Dave and Wendy Welch, Andy and Ruth Anderson, Ray (Ezra Meeker) and Maura Egan and Wes and Suzie Perkinson.

either installed, ordered or dedicated in 1906. Meeker's inscription on Independence Rock would bring the total to twenty-two. Many more markers and signs followed over the years. Larsen identifies fifty-two markers and twenty-five signed sites whose roots can be traced to that 1906 journey. In some of his later writings Meeker talks of installing 150 or more markers. While there was a clear shortfall between his goal and the result, Meeker made a good beginning in 1906.

When he returned from his 1906 expedition in 1908 (a two year road trip!), he realized that he did not have a full recollection of the trail's location from 56 years earlier. Even at that



OCTA Discount for *American Road*

As a benefit of OCTA membership, we can offer discount subscriptions to *American Road* magazine directly through OCTA's website.

American Road brings a new voice to the travel market with a focus on road trips in the United States. The OCTA rate is \$15.95 annually for four quarterly issues. The regular newsstand price is \$19.80 per year. You can also get a two-year subscription for \$27.95. OCTA will receive \$2 for each one-year subscription purchased by OCTA members and \$3 from each two-year subscription.

To get your subscription started, visit OCTA's homepage at www.octa-trails.org, look for the *American Road* link, click the link (Canada and all other nations have their own links), and place your order. Or, call toll free at 1-877-285-5434 and be sure to tell them the special OCTA member subscription code (which is "octa") to take advantage of the discount.

Emigrant Names 2 Available from COED

By Sharon Manhart

Wouldn't it be fun to find the name of your ancestor heading West on the Oregon/California Trail? This can happen with Emigrant Names 2, the set of two CDs published by OCTA. All names found in over 3,200 original trail documents are in this set. Easy to use, you can click your way through each name mentioned, in all different spellings. There are 70,000 names from which to choose.

A family researching a fellow who left Texas and became a famous judge in California found him mentioned in an 1849 trail document, when he was 19 years old. From Milwaukee a family knew a vague story of an

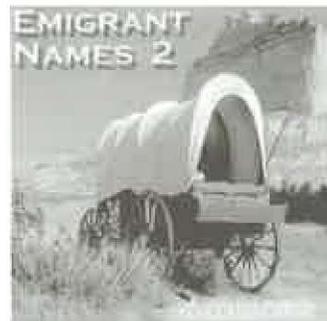
ancestor named Dougherty who "went west on the trail." Searching the EN2 database provided them with every mention of a person with that or similar name from a variety of trail trips--1849 through 1879. This gives them a good place to launch their research.

Each name listed gives the document from which it came including locations, dates of departure, and all other names given in that letter or diary or newspaper article. The chances for further genealogical sleuthing are great using EN2!

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Gateway Chapter

Convention Plans and Programs Keep Chapter Busy

By Jackie Lewin
Convention Co-Chair

The Gateway Chapter has been busy preparing for the St. Joe Convention. Planning meetings have been held and the committee chairs have been working. Don't miss out on your chance to have them share their enthusiasm for St. Joseph and the historic sites of the area. We want to see you in August.

In addition, this spring Gateway sponsored two educational programs



Jere Krakow, right, guest speaker at the April 11 Gateway meeting, visits with Millie Humphreys.

for the public. On March 14, Craig Crease, who is knowledgeable about Kansas City and trail history, spoke about the explorations Zebulon Pike and the upcoming bicentennial of the expedition. Craig was extremely knowledgeable about Pike's expedition and was an entertaining speaker. Craig, along with Ross Marshall, will be a St. Joe convention guide for the Fort Leavenworth, Atchison and Weston tour.

On April 11, Jere Krakow, Long Distance Trails Superintendent, spoke

about the ongoing preservation efforts of the National Park Service. Jere fielded questions about the trail, its preservation and possible threats. Both programs were well attended.

Calvin and Sandy Smith, raffle chair persons for the St. Joseph 2006 Convention, need your assistance through the donation of items for the raffle, door prizes and silent auction. All types of items are needed especially books, handicrafts or purchased items. If you have



Current Gateway President Bill Leppert presented Past President John Atkinson with a Gateway Certificate of Appreciation. John served for four years as Gateway's president and continues to serve the chapter.

questions or have something to donate, contact Calvin and Sandra Smith, 2509 Shirley Drive, St. Joseph, Mo. 64503 or e-mail them at, mrcls@stjoelive.com.



Several planning meetings were held for the St. Joe 2006 Convention: L to R: Joyce Sutherland; Del Sutherland; Convention co-chairs John Atkinson and Jackie Lewin; Millie Humphreys; Sandy Smith and Calvin Smith. (Photos courtesy Jackie Lewin)

Trips and Talks on Crossroad Agenda

Compiled from the Chapter Newsletter

In late April the Utah Crossroads Chapter took a spring field trip on the Bidwell-Bartleson Trail from Corinne to Bidwell Pass. Roy Tea led this tour with stops at emigrant campsites through Park Valley and Lucin before traveling down to Donner Springs and ending the trek at Bidwell Pass.

Other spring programs included a presentation by Mike Landon which concentrated on Lucetta Schuey and one by Will Bagley who discussed his recent research projects.

Crossroads member Lyndia Carter wrote the following pieces for the chapter newsletter about those events, which we excerpt here.

Lucetta Shuey

Some people had a lot of fun on their way west, and Lucetta Shuey was one of those who not only had a great time, but allows us through her writing to enjoy the trip as well. Mike Landon introduced Crossroads members to Lucetta at the Utah Crossroads April general membership meeting.

Lucetta Shuey, single, young, vivacious, flirtatious, and effervescent, set out for California with her parents and other family members in 1860. Many of her relatives, including several brothers, had already made the trip, some more than once, and now Lucetta was going to join them in the adventure of a lifetime. She was a fantastic diarist. Her detail-filled account, as shared by Mike Landon, shows us a woman's perspective, but more than that it shows us a young, single woman's

perspective. Lucetta enjoyed the trip; hers is far from a "oh woe-is-me" account. Her diary entries tell of the daily life of the trail, whisper the latest gossip, expose her flirtations, note encounters with the military and describe Indian depredations (including burned stage stations in Nevada) that they miss only by days. Although Lucetta's personal journey is safe, she tells of a time period when Indian troubles could result in danger.

Headed for Oakland, CA, Lucetta's trek covers that vast amount of territory from Adams County, Illinois to the Big Trees (The Calaveras area) of California, where it abruptly ends mid-sentence.

Lucetta isn't murdered with pen in hand, however; she did survive the journey, married a 49er, taught school, moved several times in California, and eventually died in 1914). Her diary has many interesting aspects, including her unusual route. Her family took the Lander Cutoff and hers is the only account of the Carson route over the Sierra Nevada in 1860. Her account is charming; she is always noticing young men, especially a certain U.S. Army captain, probably from Camp Floyd, as they pass through Idaho.

Will Bagley

Will Bagley shared the excitement of his search for Utah trail narratives at the January Utah Crossroads meeting held in Salt Lake City. In 2000, National Park Service support made it possible for Bagley to begin a historic resource study about the emigrant roads west. While working on a trilogy, *The Long and Perilous Journey*, about the Oregon and

California Trails, Will discovered a lot of "stuff," meaning many great journals and other primary accounts not used before or under-utilized. He found many accounts of Mormons on



Will Bagley.

the way west that shed light on the Oregon, California and Utah trails and their variants.

He also found that the bibliographies upon which many of us rely as we study and write about the overland travel are far from complete. Bagley praised Merrill J. Mattes' work in compiling *Platte River Road Narratives* (published in 1988), which covers American westward migration from 1812 through 1866 but said that although it is a great bibliography, it is not complete. Will has found at least 451 additions to Mattes' catalog of overland accounts. Bagley noted that Mattes did not exhaust resources at the historical department library and archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in part because Mattes did not have the access he needed; the Church records are now much more accessible than they were then.

In addition, Will admits it is easier to research now with so many sources available on the Internet, especially those that had been held by private individuals or lesser known organizations. Bagley lauded the computer accessible *Mormon Overland Narratives*, compiled by Mel Bashore.

OCTA Celebrates Centennial of Ezra Meeker's 1906 Oregon Trail Crossing

By Dave Welch
National Preservation Officer

The kickoff for the Meeker Centennial project took place in April. The main event—reenactments along the Oregon Trail—gets underway July 23 when a group of OCTA and Ezra Meeker Historical Society members will re-visit many of the sites visited by Ezra Meeker in 1906. Ezra's goal was to place an Oregon Trail marker at key locations.

A century ago two communities in Washington failed to carry through on their promise to Meeker. They, and another recalcitrant (Soda Springs, ID), will correct this omission this year. In Chehalis and Claquato, WA, Karen Johnson and Edna Fund of the Lewis County Museum dedicated their two monuments on April 29 to begin the Meeker celebration.

This year representatives from OCTA and others will retrace part of Meeker's journey with one of the Meeker wagons. The journey begins in Puyallup, WA on July 22 and will conclude the east-bound trip at the OCTA Convention in Saint Joseph, MO.

At each location there will be performances by Ray Egan portraying Ezra Meeker, and the telling of the story of the expedition by Dennis

Larsen, in addition to programs organized locally.

We encourage all to join the procession from site to site. Period attire is encouraged. Join in the Celebration! More information is available at www.meekermansion.org

2006 Schedule

July 22 Puyallup WA
July 23 Tumwater WA
July 23 The Dalles OR
July 24 Pendleton OR
July 25 Durkee OR
July 26 Flagstaff Hill/Baker City OR
July 27 Boise ID
July 28 Three Island Crossing / Glens Ferry ID
July 29 Pocatello / Fort Hall ID
July 30 Soda Springs, ID
July 31 Rock Springs WY
Aug 1 South Pass WY
Aug 3 Casper WY
Aug 4 Scotts Bluff NE
Aug 5 Kearney/Fort Kearny NE
Aug 6 Alcove Spring KS
Aug 7 Arrive St Joseph MO
Aug 8-12 OCTA Convention
Aug 10 Independence MO
Aug 16 Fort Bridger, WY
Aug 19 Walla Walla WA
Aug 21 Return to Puyallup WA

Northwest Chapter

Awards Handed Out at Annual Meeting

Compiled from the Chapter Newsletter

Lethene Parks was presented with the Richard and Trudy Ackerman Meritorious Achievement Award for her extensive contributions to NW Chapter affairs at the Chapter's annual meeting in The Dalles in March.

Lowell Tiller, Tom Laidlaw and Jim Tompkins were awarded chapter Certificates of Appreciation and Glenn Harrison was given a gift in appreciation for his service as president.

There were 82 people at the meeting including twelve from the Yakima Genealogical Society. Linda Crew gave an excellent talk about her book, *A Heart for any Fate: Westward to Oregon 1845*, based on the events of the tragic 1845 Meeker train. Jenny Miller and Lethene Parks teamed up to give an entertaining slide show of trail sites entitled, "A Visual Journey."



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An Interesting and Exciting Discovery in the Meeker Papers

By Dennis Larsen

As some of you know, I have been at work the last several years transcribing the 50,000 letters in the Meeker Collection at the Washington State Historical Society Research Center in Tacoma, WA. I have completed the several thousand letters covering the 1906-08 Old Oregon Trail Monument Expedition and have moved onto his 1910-12 Expedition. While going through these letters I discovered that Ezra's primary purpose on this expedition was to thoroughly map the exact route of the Oregon Trail and present his findings to Congress.

The letters kept referring to a map he had created that was over 200 feet long. In my prowling around the many boxes of the Meeker collection I had learned that one box contained mostly maps.

I told Dave Welch what I had learned and so on a hunch we went to Tacoma to look at the maps. And we were rewarded for our efforts. From the descriptions in the correspondence I am convinced that these are indeed the maps of the Oregon Trail that Ezra made and had made in 1910. Dave is working on putting together an index of the box contents. At the very least this is the first effort to map the entire Oregon Trail. Any significance beyond that I will leave for the experts.

The maps themselves are in excellent shape, on good quality vellum paper and they are indeed over 200 feet long. We rolled them out in parts pretty much covering the entire length of the research center multiple times. Some are annotated. Kansas is covered in two separate mappings,

one in pencil that Ezra did and another by the Kansas Historical Society.

Hopefully we will have more information to share at the St. Joseph convention. We also will be glad to discuss these findings at any of our stops along the route of our reenactment this summer. Visit www.meekermansion.org for our schedule.

To whet your appetites I will share with you with some of the correspondence in Meeker's files:

I adopted a different method than on my trip of 1906-7 when effort(s) were made to secure erection of monuments, in that during the eight months and eleven days on the plains I turned my attention to locating the actual track of the Trail and securing tracings of it from the public land survey. I have four states, Idaho, Wyoming, Nebraska, and Kansas, I may say complete, making rolls in the aggregate of over 200 feet in length and covering nearly 1600 miles of the Trail. Oregon is not complete but we know it so well, as well as Washington that we feel no concern that the track will be lost. *(January 5, 1911 letter to John L Corwin 629 W 3rd St. Long Beach, Calif.)*

Because of the Committee's action regarding the bill to appropriate only \$25,000, I have made another trip over the Trail, this time turning my attention exclusively to tracing and locating its whereabouts. I now have tracings of the public survey nearly 200 feet long and showing the 1600 miles of the exact

location of the Trail and can give a close estimate of the present traveled road crossings and thereby determine the number of markers needed. *(Dec 23, 1910 letter to Congressman W. E. Humphrey)*

Dear Sir

I enclose statement in substance I should have said before the committee. I have the completed tracings of the section lines the Trail crosses for the four states, Idaho, Wyoming, Nebraska and Kansas, a plat nearly 200 feet long but concluded best to hold it for future use; *(Jan 13, 1911 letter to Congressman W. E. Humphrey)*

Mountain Home
June 2nd, 1910
Fred H. McConnel
County Surveyor
Caldwell, Idaho

Dear Sir

I herewith send you tracings of Township plats showing the old roads. I wish you would draw a red line to show the present traveled roads as mentioned in our conversation and send the same by letter postage to Twin Falls. Herewith find stamps to cover postage.

Any object of interest of which you have knowledge of such for instance the location of the scene of massacre a few miles below your city. The location of towns or cities and the railroad, if not too much trouble, I wish you would indicate it on the plats.

Continued on Next Page

Convention Possibilities in Idaho

From the Chapter Newsletter

Initial discussions about the Idaho chapter of OCTA hosting a national convention in 2010 occurred at the chapter's spring meeting in April. In attendance were National OCTA President Vern Gorzitze and Association Manger Travis Boley.

Some preliminary planning has already been done, looking at the possibility of having the 2010 Convention in the Nampa, ID, area. This is an easily accessible area that would be somewhat central for field trip access to many parts of Idaho's historic trail areas—toward Mountain Home, into Owyhee County, to the west into eastern Oregon (some of the Utter Disaster sites), and also northerly to some of the remnants of the Goodale's Cutoff portion of the

Oregon Trails system that have recently been discovered, toward Emmett and beyond. In this western part of the state trail remnants include the main Oregon Trail and the North Alternate through Elmore, Ada, and Canyon Counties, the South Alternate through Elmore and Owyhee Counties, and Goodale's Cutoff northwest of Eagle through part of Ada, Gem and Payette Counties.

In ongoing mapping and marking projects, the chapter will be working on marking the Ditto Creek Burn with outings July 8 and again on Sept. 23. Work on the McTucker Road will take place Sept. 9. For more information contact James McGill.

The latest research that has opened up the history of the descendants of Tim and Jennie Goodale—as well as Jennie's second family with Jacob Highbarger—is now available on CD or in print. This 80-page research paper also includes a year-by-year history of Tim's & Jennie's many frontier involvements, Tim's starting from about the middle of the 1800s. It also includes the years from the completion of their leadership of the 1862 Goodale Wagon Train, the Brownlee Ferry years, the Netarts,



View of Road Canyon (once Spring Canyon) where the Goodale Trail began the Oregon Road. (Photo by Jim McGill)

Oregon years, and their separate lives after 1870. The beginning of the research of the Oregon portion of Goodale's Cutoff with maps and satellite photos are also included.

The somewhat tragic later lives of Shoshone Indian, Jennie, and her only child by Tim, Mary Winona Goodale Highbarger Hanson, are documented with some family records graciously donated by one of Winona's granddaughters, one great-granddaughter, and one grandson. Family photos are included. Contact James McGill for a copy of this report at 305 Melba Drive, Nampa, Idaho 83686; jwmcgill@cablone.net.

Meeker Letters

Continued from Previous Page

My driver's illness compelled me to be with my outfit else would have visited your city again and gone over the tracing with you.

Respect,
Ezra Meeker

Dear Sir

I enclose map of Kansas upon which you will find a dim lead pencil line intended to indicate the general route of the Oregon Trail as traveled in 1843. I wish you would examine this and make such corrections as you may see necessary. (July 22, 1910 letter to Geo W. Martin, Sec Historical Society Topeka, Kansas)

Dear Sir

I wrote you on the 20th inst. addressing letter by way Seattle and today read in a N.Y. paper that you had arrived in Kansas City Sept. 24th on your way to Washington D.C. it were quite a long article well written and giving particulars of what you had done and what you were striving to do. one thing I noticed in particular were that you had a map 370 feet long showing the Trail in detail to lay before Congress (well I reckon that is some map. eh.) (Sept. 27th, 1910 letter from William B. Mardon)

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KANZA Chapter

Researching the Breyfogle family gravesite along the St. Joe Road uncovers interesting details

By Ted Hopkins

We were recently contacted by Walter Breyfogle of Virginia, seeking information on the gravesite of some of his ancestors that had died of cholera and were buried near the St. Joe Road about 30 miles from St. Joseph. He has supplied information from a family history giving details of the tragedy where three boys of the family were orphaned. Daniel Breyfogle, his great-great grandfather, with wife Theresa and four children, started overland from Ohio for California in 1852.

The account states, "When thirty miles from St Joseph, Indian Territory, on the Fort Hall road, but three quarters of a mile from the Agency, Daniel and Theresa and their daughter Harriet died the same day (May 8, 1852) of cholera. They were buried on rising ground about one hundred yards from the road—Daniel and Theresa in one grave. Before he died, Daniel called his sons to him and told them to return to Ohio, which they did, and there they were cared for by relatives until able to support themselves."

The eldest son Charles was 16 years old at the time, while Daniel was 10 and George 8. A son of Charles said that "the boys were taken by travelers going east, where they finally reached Delaware, Ohio where they were reared to manhood by Reuben Breyfogle, their uncle." One of these sons was Walter Breyfogle's great grandfather.

Thirty miles from St. Joseph would place the gravesites near Highland, KS and the Iowa, Sac and

Fox Mission. To look for more precise information on the location of the graves, we contacted Suzette McCord-Rogers of the Native American Heritage Museum (originally the Iowa, Sac & Fox Mission) and an OCTA Board member. After looking at original survey maps and comparing the description of the burial place to the area, she has "ascertained they were most likely buried in what is now the Highland Cemetery. The Agency refers to the Great Nemaha Sub-Agency which was located south of the Sac & Fox Mission and very near the cemetery. The trail goes by the cemetery and possibly through it at one time. The cemetery is on a hill and the description seems to fit. Many of the cemeteries in this area were started by Oregon-California trail burials. The graves if marked at one time are no longer marked. The Mission sits on a feeder trail from Iowa Point to the St. Joe road and is north of the trail and agency."

This information was provided to Walter Breyfogle, who plans to visit the area this summer. Several Breyfogles joined the California gold rush, and Walter has given us a copy of Joshua Breyfogle's diary describing their trip to the gold fields in 1849.

Wanted

Large and small items
needed for the 23rd Annual
OCTA Convention Raffle. If
you have something to
donate contact Calvin and
Sandra Smith by e-mail:
mrcls@stjoelive.com

LDS Church, BLM, ACLU Settle Martin's Cove Lawsuit

By Candy Moulton
NFP Editor

The American Civil Liberties Union reached an agreement in mid-May in a lawsuit filed over access and use of Martin's Cove. At issue was an area of federal land under lease to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in central Wyoming. The church owns property around the cove and in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management has developed trails to the area to interpret the history of Mormon handcart pioneers who died in a blizzard 150 years ago.

Last year, four Wyoming residents represented by the ACLU filed a lawsuit arguing that the BLM should not have entered a 25-year lease with the Mormon Church to manage the site, west of Casper. The lawsuit claimed that Mormon tour guides at Martin's Cove proselytized to visitors. Attorneys for the BLM and the church have denied those charges.

The BLM had joined the church in defending the lawsuit and

announced the agreement between the agency, the LDS Church and the ACLU.

Under terms of the settlement the BLM and the church will use separate and distinct signs to clearly identify public land and public access.

The Pony Express, the Oregon Trail, the California Trail and the Mormon Trail all passed through the area. In October of 1856, an early blizzard caught Mormon handcart pioneers traveling with the Edward Martin Company, forcing them to seek shelter in the area.

The plight of the Martin party and also the handcart company led by James Grey Wille is interpreted at the Mormon Handcart Center, which the LDS church owns and operates on what was the former Tom Sun ranch.

Thousands of Mormon pilgrims and Western history buffs visit the site each year, some re-enacting the handcart trek in period clothing and pushing handcarts that are available at the center for such treks.

Painted Past Takes Trail Characters to Europe

The Painted Past Board of Directors would like to announce that Painted Past Productions, of Casper WY, will be leaving on October 21 to take cast and crew members of their children's musical overseas to entertain for the troops and their families, said Painted Past Director Donna Fisher, an OCTA member and Chair of the Awards Committee.

"It is a once in a lifetime opportunity. No single entity in Wyoming has raised the money to do something like this before, and now it is time for Wyoming to do something for the troops," Fisher said.

Painted Past Productions will take their children's musical production and a dinner theater to present to the troops and officers. They will entertain the children by presenting the historical characters they have been doing in the Natrona County School system for the last three years.

These characters include trail travelers Louisa Lithgow, Patty Sessions and Jerome Dickenson. They are presented regularly during the summer at a tour of Fort Casper with all information used taken from trail diaries.

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"Rooster Comb" a trail landmark at the south end of Doubtful Canyon. (Photo by Ken White)

Trail Turtles Head to Doubtful Canyon

The Trail Turtles did some trail work in Doubtful Canyon in May. This canyon crossed the New Mexico/Arizona border just north of what is now I-10. It was not used by the 49ers, but became the main route to Apache Pass in the 1850s and was the route used by later emigrants and the Butterfield Stage.

The canyon was the site of various ambushes during the turbulent times

of Apache Indian troubles. Today there is some grazing in the area, but it remains much as it must have been in the 1800s. Just driving through the wash as the travelers did, seeing the cliffs, desert vegetation and changing lighting was a treat for all of us.

We found little actual trail evidence as years of water flow during heavy rains have kept the canyon scoured out. We camped about midway through the canyon, absorbing the atmosphere.

The daytime heat made it difficult to do any hiking in the afternoon. After a fruitless search for the San Simon stage station between Doubtful Canyon and Apache Pass, the group decided to pack it in and return home.



Camping in Doubtful Canyon. (Photo by Rose Ann Tompkins)

Southwest Chapter

Phoenix in the Spring

By Peter Patterson

OCTA's mid-year Board meeting was held in Phoenix the weekend of March 18-19 at the Grace Inn Convention Center.

On Saturday afternoon, an informal meeting of the Southwest Chapter took place at the home of Reba Wells Grandrud. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for new chapter members to meet others and to provide everyone an opportunity to talk about the future of the chapter. Those attending were Harland Tompkins, Rose Ann Tompkins, Reba Grandrud, Mary Mueller, Margaret Patterson, Peter Patterson, Linda Rushton, Roger Blair and Susan Doyle. Three of the members present were charter members of SW-OCTA when the chapter began in 1989. Several are also members of other trail societies including the Old Spanish Trail Association (OSTA) and the Anza Trail Society (ANZA).

The meeting discussion covered a range of issues, including a loss of members, a perceived lack of attention by OCTA for the southern trails, new challenges to historic emigrant trails and a request from the board that SW-OCTA consider planning and hosting a national OCTA convention in Arizona or New Mexico. These new challenges are beyond the capacity of SW-OCTA, OSTA and ANZA/Maricopa to resolve by working separately. Both Reba and Peter Patterson spoke to the need for partnerships of trail societies and coordinated action to address new issues and opportunities.

After everyone had a chance to express what they saw as appropriate next steps for SW-OCTA, a rough consensus began to emerge around new activities to include: a symposium to be co-sponsored with the Anza Society, Anza National Historic Trail and Old Spanish National Historic Trail organizations, as well as a membership campaign. The ongoing activities of the SW-OCTA Trail Turtles were considered by all to be valuable to the future of the southern trails and will continue. Linda Rushton, Arizona rep for the Anza Society and a tour leader, volunteered to help organize symposia and tours. Margaret Patterson, a retired travel agent, volunteered to assist Linda.

An ad-hoc planning committee will be convened with an assignment to bring forward to the SW-OCTA membership a proposed work plan for the next 6-12 months. Planning Committee volunteers to date include Reba Grandrud, Linda Rushton and Peter Patterson. Please contact Reba (602-992-0339) or Peter (623-748-3241) if you are interested in helping to plan the expanded activities.

By Rose Ann Thompkins

OCTA Has a New Coin *Recognizing* Ezra Meeker's 1906 Oregon Trail Monument Expedition

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News From the Plains

CA-NV Chapter

Three Donner Passes Part of Trail Hike

Mac McKenzie is leading an exciting trail hike to the Donner, Coldstream and Roller Passes on July 22. Here is your chance to visit three routes the emigrants on the Truckee Trail took to get over the crest of the Sierra. It is a 4.6 mile round trip hike with approximately a 1400 foot elevation gain. For information contact Mac at 916-966-1006; decmckenzie@webtv.net

Mt. Stephens to Nevada City Tour

Finally, a fun auto tour that does not require a high clearance, four wheel drive vehicle! Join Jim Rose for this exciting tour on Aug. 19. Meet at Donner Memorial State Park (just west of Truckee, off Interstate 80) at 9:00 a.m., travel along the Yuba River to Emigrant Gap overlooking Bear Valley, then down to Bear Valley where the route turns to Nevada City following Highway 20. Pack a lunch to eat at the Big Bend Ranger Station.

For more information, contact Jim Ros, 530-265-3754 or Priscilla Van der Pas, 530-272-5154; pvanderpas@juno.com.

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Visit the National Frontier Trails Museum to explore the Westward Expansion.



"Expansion of the United States: Featuring the Lewis & Clark Expedition" board game is an educational and fun game for ages 8 to adult. This game is easy to play, fun to learn and is for ages 8 and up from 1 to 6 players. Included is a colorful playing board, 30 game cards, instructions for 3 levels of play, reproducible activities and puzzles which includes a study guide and bibliography. As an additional bonus, an "Expansion of the US" poster (\$5.00 value) is included. \$14.95.

The National Frontier Trails Museum presents the story of the exploration, acquisition, and settlement of the American West.

An award-winning film prepares visitors for the interpretive exhibits which guide them along the Santa Fe, Oregon, and California Trails. Quotations from trail diaries are extensively used, allowing pioneer travelers to tell their experiences in their own words. The museum has an authentic covered wagon, relics and artifacts, activities for kids, wagon train swales, and museum store.

For more information on the Trails Museum and upcoming special events, please call 816-325-7575, or check our website at www.frontiertrailsmuseum.org.

Shop our museum store for this and many other book and gift items.

The National Frontier Trails Museum
318 W. Pacific, Independence, MO 64050
816-325-7575 frontiertrailsmuseum.org

Mon. Sat. 9:00 am - 4:30 pm Adults \$5.00, Seniors (62 & older) \$4.50
Sunday 12:30 - 4:30 pm Youth (6 - 17) \$3.00, Age 5 & under Free



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